

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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PM-03 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-05 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0517
INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SP, NATO, PINT, PFOR, MILI, GW
SUBJECT: MORE DISCUSSION IN THE FRG OVER SPAIN'S
RELATIONSHIP TO NATO

REF: BONN 8809

BEGIN SUMMARY: ON MAY 29, DURING THE HEIGHT OF THE FUROR
OVER LT. GENERAL HILDEBRANDT'S ATTENDANCE AT THE ANNUAL
VICTORY PARADE CELEBRATING FRANCO'S DEFEAT OF SPANISH
REPUBLICAN FORCES (REFTEL), DEFENSE MINISTER LEBER TOOK
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PART IN A TELEVISION QUESTION AND ANSWER PROGRAMTHE

CDU/CSU MILITARY EXPERT MANFRED WOERNER AND SEVERAL JOURNALISTS ALSO PARTICIPATED. THE SUBJECT OF SPAIN'S RELATIONSHIP WITH NATO CAME UP. LEBER TOOK THE POSITION THAT THE FRG SHOULD NOT GET IN THE FOREFRONT ON THIS QUESTION. WOERNER PROPOSED DISCUSSION ABOUT AN ASSOCIATION WITH NATO OR A PACT OF MUTUAL ASSISTANCE. BOTH AGREED THAT THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF FULL SPANISH MEMBERSHIP IN NATO AT THIS TIME.

END SUMMARY

1. THE SPANISH PROBLEM AROSE IN THE CONTEXT OF A DISCUSSION ABOUT ALLIES WHO HOLD DIFFERENT VIEWS FROM THOSE OF THE FRG, PARTICULARLY ON MORAL ISSUES. LEBER SAID THAT THE FRG MUST RESPECT THESE VIEWS. "WHEN THE SPANISH QUESTION IS UNDER CONSIDERATION, WE SHOULD, FOR EXAMPLE, NOT SPEARHEAD THE DISCUSSION BUT RATHER TAKE A SOMEWHAT RESERVED ATTITUDE....IF WE PUSH AHEAD HERE, IT IS ONLY NATURAL THAT THERE WILL BE PEOPLE IN OTHER COUNTRIES WHO SAY, 'HERE WE GO AGAIN--THE CONDOR LEGION AND THE FALANGE AND THE SPANISH FASCISTS AND THE OLD GERMAN NAZIS--NOW THEY ARE WORKING TOGETHER AGAIN.' SPAIN IS A EUROPEAN COUNTRY. WE CAN ONLY HOPE THAT MATTERS IN SPAIN WILL BE STEERED IN A TIMELY FASHION SO THAT SPAIN CAN BE ACCEPTED IN THE CIRCLE OF FREE PEOPLE. ...I RESIST ANY KIND OF LEFTIST EXTREMISM, BUT IN SPAIN WE HAVE RIGHTIST EXTREMISM. THE LATTER DOES NOT BECOME ANY NICER BECAUSE WEST EUROPEAN DEFENSE WOULD BE IMPROVED IF SPAIN WOULD BECOME A MEMBER. THAT MUST BE MADE CLEAR."

2. COMMENT: LEBER HAS ATTEMPTED TO BE HELPFUL TO THE U.S. ON THE SPANISH ISSUE (SEE FOR EXAMPLE USNATO 2894 REPORTING THE DPC MINISTERIAL MEETING ON MAY 22). HOWEVER, THE FUROR OF GENERAL HILDEBRANDT'S ATTENDANCE AT THE VICTORY PARADE DEMONSTRATES THE INTERNAL GERMAN POLITICAL REALITIES WHICH LIMIT WHAT LEBER CAN DO. IN LIKE MANNER, LEBER'S COMMENTS ABOVE DEMONSTRATE HIS APPRECIATION THAT THE FRG CANNOT GET TOO FAR AHEAD OF ITS OTHER EUROPEAN NATO ALLIES ON THIS ISSUE. END

COMMENT

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